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Human rights questions: implementation of human rights instruments

Status of the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Mandate of the Fund

A. Establishment of the Fund

1. The United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery was established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/122 of 17 December 1991 with the purpose of assisting representatives of non-governmental organizations, from different regions dealing with issues of contemporary forms of slavery to participate in the deliberations of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery by providing them with financial assistance and by extending, through established channels of assistance, humanitarian, legal and financial aid to individuals whose human rights have been severely violated as a result of contemporary forms of slavery.

B. Board of Trustees

2. The Fund is administered in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations by the Secretary-General, assisted by a Board of Trustees. The mandate of the Board is to advise the Secretary-General on the administration of the Fund, through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

3. The Board is composed of five persons with experience in the field of human rights, in particular, contemporary forms of slavery, who serve in their personal capacity. The Board members are appointed by the Secretary-General for a three-year renewable term, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

4. The five members who have been appointed by the Secretary-General for a three-year term (until 31 December 1998), with due regard to equitable geographical distribution, are: Mr. Swami Agnivesh (India), Mr. Cheikh Saad-Bouh Kamara (Mauritania), Ms. Tatiana Matveeva (Russian Federation), Mr. Jose de Souza Martins (Brazil) and Ms. Lesley Roberts (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland).

C. Beneficiaries

5. According to the criteria established by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/122, the only beneficiaries of assistance for the Fund shall be representatives of non-governmental organizations dealing with issues of contemporary forms of slavery: (a) who are so considered

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by the Board of Trustees; (b) who would not, in the opinion of the Board, be able to attend the sessions of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery without the assistance provided by the Fund; (c) who would be able to contribute to a deeper knowledge on the part of the Working Group of the problems relating to contemporary forms of slavery; as well as (d) individuals whose human rights have been severely violated as a result of contemporary forms of slavery and who are so considered by the Board of Trustees.

II. Financial situation of the Fund

6. Funding is obtained by means of voluntary contributions from Governments, non-governmental organizations and other private or public entities.

7. Upon the recommendation of the Board of Trustees, all the money available in 1997 has been spent for travel and project grants.

8. On 2 December 1997, Ms. Mary Robinson, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, made an appeal to all Governments to contribute to the Fund, if possible before February 1998, prior to the annual session of the Board of Trustees, to be able to recommend travel and project grants for 1998.

9. As at 1 July 1998, the voluntary contributions paid to the Fund were not sufficient to allocate travel and project grants nor to organize the fourth session of the Board of Trustees, which had to be postponed.

10. If no sufficient contributions are received, the Board of Trustees may have to suggest to the Secretary-General to recommend an end to the activities of the Fund.

A. Contributions

11. The following contributions were received from Governments between 20 April 1993 and 1 July 1998:[1]

State	*United States dollars*	*Date of payment*
Chile	2 500	16 February 1994
Cyprus	1 000	12 May 1998
Kuwait	12 000	20 May 1994
Morocco	2 318	4 May 1995
Netherlands	27 495	
Switzerland	15 152	8 December 1994
South Africa	10 000	6 April 1998
Turkey	5 000	20 February 1998
Total	**75 465**	

12. The following contributions were received from non-governmental organizations and individuals between 20 April 1993 and 1 July 1998:[2]

Contributor	*United States dollars*	*Date of payment*
Dr. Buscioni-Francolanci	500	28 September 1994
Child Eyes Campaign	100	20 April 1993
Ms. Halima Warzazi	503	28 May 1998
Total	**1 103**	
Grand total (paras. 11 and 12)	**76 568**	
Donation: (air ticket) by Air India)	1 875	

B. Pledges

13. The following pledges were outstanding as at 1 July 1998:

State	*United States dollars*	*Date of pledge*
Kuwait	25 000	4 March 1998
United Kingdom	8 333[a]	18 February 1998
Total	**33 333**	

[a] £5,000.

III. Third session of the Board of Trustees

14. With the modest sum of US$ 23,850 available in 1997, the Board recommended six travel grants and three project grants in seven countries. The recommendations were approved by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on behalf of the Secretary-General.

15. The beneficiary organizations were mentioned in the Note by the Secretariat to the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities which contained the recommendations adopted by the Board at its third session and approved by the Secretary-General on 27 March 1997.[2]

16. The two representatives from a non-governmental organization, a former child prostitute and a translator, who were not able to attend the 1997 session of the Working Group[3] participated in the sixteenth session of the Working Group in May 1998. The Working Group heard their testimony on 25 May 1998.

17. The Board in 1997 recommended two travel grants on a contingency list, subject to receipt of voluntary contributions, which could be awarded in 1999.

Notes

[1] According to Official Receipt Vouchers available at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

[2] E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.2/1997/4.

[3] Ibid., annex, section (b) A, application No. 12.